

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 MCT-02 SSM-03 SAA-01
SES-02 IO-13 ACDA-12 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 EB-08
TRSE-00 OMB-01 /115 W
-----095297 241347Z /50

O P 241200Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9381
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4933

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION, AUGUST 24, 1978 - 1400 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4894 (DTG 231201Z AUG 78)

1. SUMMARY. SNIPING ON THE FUAD SHIHAB FREEWAY RESUMED BRIEFLY.
THERE HAVE BEEN NO FURTHER EXPLOSIONS IN THE PORT. SAEB SALAAM
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SAID THAT THE FAILURE OF THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT WOULD
BRING PEACE TO LEBANON. PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL-HOSS AND
NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN TRADED REMARKS ON THE SITUATION IN
EAST BEIRUT. THE LOCAL YMCA DIRECTOR FOUND THE ECONOMY IN
SOUTH LEBANON THRIVING. END SUMMARY.

2. EAST BEIRUT.

A. BEIRUT REMAINS TENSE IN THE WAKE OF KIDNAPPING
AND SNIPING INCIDENTS.

--AS INDICATED PREVIOUS SITREP, AT ABOUT 0630 HOURS ON
AUGUST 23, MEMBERS OF A PRO-SYRIAN LEBANESE MUSLIM MINIFACTION,
MOHAMMED ZAKARIYAH ITANI'S "PIONEERS," KIDNAPPED FOUR
EMPLOYEES OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL LAUNDRY
WHO WERE DRIVING FROM EAST TO WEST BEIRUT ON THE FUAD
SHIHAB FLYWAY, ACCORDING TO AN AUH SOURCE.

--IN RETALIATION FOR THE KIDNAPPING, SNIPERS FROM EAST
BEIRUT BEGAN SHOOTING AT TRAFFIC MOVING ACROSS THE
GREEN LINE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT, PARTICULARLY ON THE
FUAD SHIHAB FLYWAY. SNIPERS FROM WEST BEIRUT THEN JOINED
IN. (ACCORDING TO POLICE SOURCES, FIVE PEOPLE WERE KILLED
AND SIX WOUNDED. IKE CLAIMED ONLY ONE KILLED, HOWEVER.)

B. SNIPING RESUMED FOR A FEW MINUTES ON THE FUAD SHIHAB
FLYWAY AROUND 100 HOURS ON AUGUST 24. AS OF 1400
HOURS, WE HAVE NO FURTHER REPORTS OF SNIPING. THE FUAD
SHIHAB FLYWAY REMAINS CLOSED TO TRAFFIC, BUT THE MUSEUM
CROSSING IS OPEN.

3. THE PORT.

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THE PORT AGAIN OPENED THE MORNING OF AUGUST 24
AND AS OF 1400 HOURS, WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF
EXPLOSIONS. AS INDICATED IN THE PREVIOUS SITREP, ON
AUGUST 23 THE PORT WAS HIT BY EXPLOSIONS FOR THE FIFTH
STRAIGHT DAY, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE CONFLICTING REPORTS ABOUT
THE NUMBER AND NATURE OF THE EXPLOSIONS.

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9382
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 4933

-- THE ADF SAID ONE RPG HAD IMPACTED IN THE PORT ABOUT 1030 HOURS ON AUGUST 23. THE PHALANGIST LEBANESE NEWS AGENCY SAID TWO SHELLS HAD GONE OFF, ONE AT 1030 HOURS NEAR THE GRAIN SILOS AND ANOTHER AT 1140 HOURS NEAR THE PORT COMPANY'S ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES. THE LEFTIST SHAHFIYA NEWS AGENCY REPORTED THREE SHELLS--ONE AT THE GRAIN ELEVATOR, ONE AT PIER 10, AND THE THIRD NEAR THE OFFICES.

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-- PORT COMPANY HEAD HENRI PHARAON SAID THE EXPLOSION NEAR THE OFFICES HAD BEEN CAUSED BY A STICK OF DYNAMITE PLACED IN A CAR. PHARAON ALSO SAID THAT 750 TONS OF GOODS HAD BEEN MOVED ON AUGUST 22, BRINGING IN LL 130,000 IN CUSTOMS DUTIES.

4. SAEB SALAAM ON CAMP DAVID.

FORMER LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER SAEB SALAAM PUBLICLY PRE-
DICTED ON AUGUST 23 THAT THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT WOULD FAIL.
HE ADDED THAT THIS FAILURE WOULD MEAN A RETURN TO ARAB SOL-
IDARITY AND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD, IN TURN, MEAN
THE RETURN OF SECURITY AND STABILITY TO LEBANON.

5. CHAMOUN AND HOSS TRADE REMARKS.

A. NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN SAID ON AUGUST 22 THAT RE-ENFORCEMENT OF ADF POSITIONS IN EAST BEIRUT WAS A VIOLATION OF THE AUGUST 9 DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AND THAT "FURTHER FRICTION" BETWEEN THE ADF AND THE LEBANESE FRONT MILITIAS WOULD BE INEVITABLE IF THE SYRIAN FORCES DID NOT PULL OUT OF EAST BEIRUT.

B. HOSS IN REPLY TOLD REPORTS ON AUGUST 23 THAT "THERE IS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR RENEWED CLASHES." THE EVENING OF AUGUST 23 CHAMOUN RESPONDED AFTER A MEETING WITH MILITIA COMMANDER BACHIR GEMAYEL AND SAID, "SECURITY BECOMES OCCUPATION IN THE ABSENCE OF NATIONAL INTEGRITY. . . IT IS MY OPINION THAT THE STATEMENTS BEING MADE BY PRIME MINISTER HOSS CANNOT BE RE-CONCILED WITH THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM OR WITH THE STATUS QUO."

6. YMCA DIRECTOR IN SOUTH LEBANON.

A. THE LOCAL YMCA DIRECTOR VISITED SOUTH LEBANON ON AUGUST
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22, PASSING VIA TYRE THROUGH QANA TO TIBNIN AND BACK THROUGH JOUAIYA TO TYRE. HE COMMENTED THAT LOCAL ECONOMIES APPEAR TO BE THRIVING, PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO KEEP UNIFIL UNITS SUPPLIED. ALL SORTS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, MOSTLY TRUCKED IN FROM OUTSIDE, WERE VISIBLE IN MARKETS ALONG WITH PLENTIFUL QUANTITIES OF SOFT DRINKS AND BEER.

B. THE DIRECTOR, WHO COMES ORIGINALLY FROM THE BORDER AREA EAST OF NAQURAH, COMMENTED THAT HE WISHED CONDITIONS IN THE SOUTH COULD BE DUPLICATED IN BEIRUT. FINALLY, HE OBSERVED THAT THE RESIDENTS OF THE SOUTH ARE ENJOYING AN ERA OF TRANQUILITY SELDOM EXPERIENCED OVER THE LAST DECADE.
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